

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Withdrawn) A system for integrating a plurality of television signal sources into a cohesive viewing environment, the system comprising:

a first television input and an associated multi-channel tuner operative to selectively tune a first television program;

a second television input and an associated multi-channel tuner operative to selectively tune a second television program;

an output to deliver a video program to display device;

a user command input device;

means for storing information representative of channel designations; and

a system controller operative to perform the following functions in response to a user command:

assign and re-assign user-defined channels designations to channels present on the first and second television inputs, and store the designations for future use, and

selectively route a television program from the first and second television inputs to the output for viewing on the display device, the switching of a particular input being a function of the user-defined channel designations.

2. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 1, at least one of the television inputs further including a descrambler module for premium services.

3. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the television inputs is a cable television input.

4. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 1, further including a telephone interface to facilitate an automatic account transaction associated with a pay-per-view program.

5. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 1, further including:

an input to receive a previously locally stored video program, the controller being further operative to selectively route the program to the output for viewing on the display device.

6. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 1, the output including separate baseband audio and video outputs.

7. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 1, further including an input to receive a digital program in data compressed form and means for selectively digitally decompressing the program prior to delivery to the display device.

8. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 1, wherein one or more additional channels carry supplemental program information, the system being further capable of automatically determining at least one of the additional channels and tuning that channel so as to output the program along with the supplemental information.

9. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 8, the additional channel carrying supplemental information to facilitate a higher-resolution viewing of the program.

10. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 9, including supplemental information associated with stereoscopic viewing.

11. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 8, the additional channel carrying supplemental audio information.

12. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 8, wherein the system is capable of automatically determining at least one of the additional channels by extracting a supplemental channel information from a program channel.

13. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 12, wherein the supplemental channel information is carried by the program channel on a repetitive basis in a non-viewable portion of program signal.

14. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 12, wherein the supplemental channel information is carried by the program channel only at the start of a particular program.

15. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 12, wherein the supplemental channel information changes during the receipt of a particular program to which supplemental information may be associated.

16. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 8, wherein the system is capable of automatically determining at least one of the additional channels by receiving a code containing additional channel information.

17. (Withdrawn) The system of claim 8, further including a plurality of outputs associated with a program and supplemental information, enabling a user to record a program received from a program channel and one or more additional channels.

18. (Currently Amended) A method of automatically changing from a first TV program to an alternate TV program transmission medium at a TV viewer location, comprising the steps of:
entering, at the viewer location, information regarding a viewing preference;
transmitting a TV program from a source to a viewer location;
receiving the TV program at the viewer location over a first TV channel, the TV program including a pointer to an alternate TV channel providing an alternate TV program with subject matter directly related to the TV program transmission medium; and
automatically switching the TV program to the alternate TV program transmission medium ~~based on~~ using the pointer and the information previously entered by the viewer without requiring any additional viewer intervention at the time of the switching.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18, wherein the TV program is a cable TV program.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18, wherein the TV program is an audio/video program transmitted in digital form.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18, wherein the step of entering the information at the viewer location includes using a hand-held remote-control unit.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18, wherein the step of entering the information at the viewer location includes using an on-screen programming technique.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18, wherein the step of entering the information at the viewer location includes downloading the information from a computer.

24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18, wherein the pointer is transmitted continuously with the TV program.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18, wherein the pointer is transmitted at the initiation of the TV program.

26. (Currently Amended) A method of directing an automatic channel changing function at a viewer location to achieve a cohesive viewing environment, comprising the steps of:

providing a channel selector at a viewer location; and
transmitting, from a broadcaster to the viewing location, a TV program on a primary transmission medium, the program including additional information for directing the channel selector to automatically switch, at least temporarily, to one or more secondary transmission media carrying alternative program material directly related to the TV program on the primary transmission medium.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the additional information is derived from preference information entered at the viewer location.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the preference information is entered using a hand-held remote-control unit.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the preference information is entered using an on-screen programming technique.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the TV program is a cable TV program.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the TV program is an audio/video program transmitted in digital form.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the additional information is transmitted continuously with the TV program.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the additional information is transmitted at the initiation of the TV program.

34. (Currently Amended) A television viewing system, comprising:
a source of an audio/video TV program including a channel-change command; and
equipment at a TV viewing location remote from the source, including a channel selector and circuitry operative to perform the following functions:
 receive the TV program,
 detect the channel-change command, and
 automatically select, on a different transmission medium, alternative program material directly related to the TV program in response to the channel-change command.

35. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 34, further including:
a device for inputting descriptive information by a viewer; and

wherein the multi-channel tuner is also changed to a different station as a function of the descriptive information in response the channel-change command.

36. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 34, wherein:
the device is a hand-held remote-control unit; and
the descriptive information is entered using an on-screen programming technique.

37. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 34, wherein the TV program is a cable TV signal.

38. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 34, wherein the TV program is an audio/video program transmitted in digital form.

39. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 34, wherein the descriptive information is transmitted continuously with the TV program.

40. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 34, wherein the descriptive information is transmitted at the initiation of the TV program.